



AHMADIYYA
MUSLIM COMMUNITY

United States of America

Safeguarding Policy for Children and Vulnerable Adults

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Article I: Overview

1. The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community USA's (Jamaat) safeguarding policy for children and vulnerable adults ("SP") applies to anyone with a Jamaat member code or anyone who identifies as a Jamaat member.
2. The Jamaat has **zero tolerance** for abuse in Jamaat programs and activities. It is the responsibility of every Jamaat employee and volunteer to act in the best interest of all children in every program.
3. The Jamaat is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for children and their families. To this end, any report of inappropriate behaviors or concerns of abuse will be taken seriously and will be reported, in accordance with this policy and state law, to the Local Islahi (Reform) Committee ("LIC") and National Islahi (Reform) Committee ("NIC") (as defined below) and the police department, Child Protective Services or other appropriate agency.
4. An element of the safe environment referenced above includes fostering a culture of reporting relevant information to the LIC and NIC. Because sexual abusers 'groom' children for abuse, it is possible a Jamaat employee or volunteer may witness behavior intended to 'groom' a child for sexual abuse. Jamaat employees and volunteers are asked to report 'grooming' behavior, any policy violations, or any concerning behaviors to the LIC and NIC immediately.
5. Jamaat employees and volunteers who may supervise other Jamaat employees or volunteers are charged with the diligent enforcement of the SP. Violations of the SP are grounds for immediate removal, disciplinary action, or reassignment from a position in the Jamaat – for both employees and volunteers. Final decisions related to policy violations will be the responsibility of the National Department of Umur-e-Amma (Internal Affairs).
6. Jamaat punitive measures—including expulsion from the Jamaat—applies to any Jamaat member found to have committed:
 - a. Sexual misconduct,
 - b. Neglect in stopping sexual misconduct,
 - c. Failure to report an allegation of sexual misconduct, or
 - d. Maliciously accusing an individual of sexual misconduct
7. Any accuser or party associated with an accuser believing to have experienced retaliation due to reporting sexual misconduct in good faith should inform Amīr Sahib USA.

Article II: Terminology

1. Sexual Misconduct: any unlawful verbal, nonverbal, written, or electronic communication or physical activity to expose an individual (minor, vulnerable adult, or any other non-consenting individual) who has not given consent or is incapable of giving consent to unwanted sexual activity. Such activity includes, but is not limited to, sexual flirtation or advance, inappropriate physical contact, physical exposure or display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, an attempt to groom a non-consenting individual to engage in sexual activity, etc.
 - a. Minor: an individual under 18 years of age.
 - b. Vulnerable Adult: an individual 18 years of age or older who, due to physical, mental, or emotional impairment is incapable of exercising a degree of physical or emotional independence expected of an adult.

2. Neglect: allowing a minor or vulnerable adult to be exposed to sexual misconduct and not informing the proper civil and Jamaat authorities.
3. Civil Authority: Any authority responsible for enforcement of criminal and civil laws and regulations governing sexual misconduct, including police, prosecutors, or other deputized officials.

Article III: SP Enforcement

1. The National Islahi Committee (“NIC”) enforces the SP on a national and local level.
 - a. The NIC is comprised of the following members:
 - i. National Secretary Tarbiyyat (who also serves as NIC chairman)
 - ii. National Sadr Majlis Ansarullah
 - iii. National Sadr Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya
 - iv. National Sadr Lajna Imaillah
 - v. Missionary in Charge
 - vi. One member appointed at the discretion of Amīr Sahib USA
2. The NIC will seek assistance from every Jamaat Local Islahi Committee (“LIC”) to evaluate any allegation of sexual misconduct.
 - a. Each LIC is comprised of the following members:
 - i. Local Secretary Tarbiyyat (who also serves as the LIC chairman)
 - ii. Local Sadr Majlis Ansarullah
 - iii. Local Qaid Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya
 - iv. Local Sadr Lajna Imaillah
 - v. Local Missionary
 - vi. One member appointed at the discretion of the local President
3. Parents are required to supervise their minor children at all times. In addition, the event organizer will ensure that no minor or vulnerable adult is left unattended or unmonitored during any Jamaat event.

Article IV: Reporting Sexual Misconduct

1. To maintain a safe environment for our children, Jamaat employees and volunteers must be aware of their individual responsibility to report any questionable circumstance, observation, act, omission, or situation that is a violation of the SP. All questions or concerns related to inappropriate, suspicious, or suspected grooming behavior should be directed to the LIC and NIC.
2. Any Jamaat employee or volunteer with reasonable concern about or knowledge of sexual misconduct must notify both the LIC and NIC, and any report of inappropriate behavior or concern of abuse or neglect will be taken seriously and will be reported by the National Department of Umur-e-Amma (Internal Affairs) in accordance with this policy and state law to Child Protective Services or criminal law enforcement.
3. Any LIC or NIC member receiving a complaint of sexual misconduct must remind the accuser to immediately inform the appropriate civil authority.
4. Every LIC or NIC member is forbidden from discussing the alleged sexual misconduct with any individual outside of the NIC or the respective LIC or the local President, except with direct permission from Amīr Sahib USA.

5. Process:

- a. The oral report must be made simultaneously to a member of the LIC and NIC by telephone or direct communication as soon as possible.
- b. The accuser, or their legal guardian, fills out the Sexual Misconduct Complaint Form (see Appendix I) within 48 hours of informing the LIC and NIC of a violation of the SP.
- c. The accuser submits the form to the LIC chairman through email. If the accusation is being filed against the LIC chairman, the accuser submits their form to the local missionary through email.
- d. The NIC Chairman informs the National Department of Umur-e-Amma (Internal Affairs), which, in turn, will inform the authorities immediately.
- e. The LIC chairman or local missionary speaks to the accuser or their legal guardian, instructs them to alert the authorities immediately and assigns the accuser a local point of contact, who must be a LIC member, to serve as the accuser's liaison.
- f. The LIC meets to discuss the accusation and conducts an investigation in accordance with the LIC Sexual Misconduct Complaint Form (see Appendix I).
- g. The LIC, based on instructions from NIC, will complete its investigation and email its Sexual Misconduct Report to the NIC.
- h. NIC will notify Amir Sahib USA for necessary action after determining whether the Jamaat member has violated or not violated the SP.
- i. If the NIC unanimously determines that the accusation was made in bad faith, the NIC may recommend disciplinary action to Amir Sahib USA.

Article V: Consequences of a Violation

1. Any person considered by the Jamaat to be harmful to a child will be immediately suspended from participation in Jamaat activities. This suspension will continue during any investigation by law enforcement or Child Protective agencies.
2. Any person found to have committed sexual misconduct must be prohibited from future participation as a Jamaat employee or volunteer in all activities and programming involving children, students, or vulnerable populations in the Jamaat. If the person is a Jamaat employee, such conduct may also result in termination of Jamaat employment.
3. Failure to report a prohibited act to the designated person constitutes a violation of the SP and grounds for termination (if a Jamaat employee) or removal (if a Jamaat volunteer). Volunteers who fail to report a prohibited act may be restricted from participation in any activities involving children, students, or vulnerable populations in the Jamaat.

Article VI: Children Monitoring Plan

1. Every Jamaat employee and volunteer is responsible for ensuring that the Jamaat program area is monitored during any programming serving children. This includes unannounced monitoring of Jamaat employees, volunteers, members and children. No child should ever be left unattended in a Jamaat area during regular programming, classes, or activities.
2. Only parents dropping off children, screened Jamaat employees, volunteers, and children are allowed in areas where Jamaat programming to children is occurring. All other adults should be asked for identification and immediately escorted out of the area. If questions or concerns arise related to any person in the area, a Jamaat employee or volunteer should be notified immediately.

3. Two trained adults should supervise children at all times (the “Two Adult Rule”). Avoid being alone with an individual child in any room or during any Jamaat program. If one supervising adult must leave a group of children, another Jamaat employee or volunteer must be notified so that the Two Adult Rule can be followed. If two individuals serving in a room are related to one another, a third unrelated Jamaat employee or volunteer must be present. If an unusual circumstance occurs and you find yourself alone with a single child, immediately take the child to a room or building occupied by others, or to a location easily observed by others. (Example: if a child is the last in a class to be picked up by a parent, move to an adjoining room where other Jamaat employees or volunteers are present.) If you need to talk with a child alone, do it in the hallway or a highly visible area, or have another leader with you. After every Jamaat event, ensure that every room, area, and restroom is checked prior to leaving.

Article VII: Disciplinary Policies Involving Children

1. It is the Jamaat’s policy that Jamaat employees and volunteers are prohibited from using physical discipline in any manner for behavioral management of children. No form of physical discipline is acceptable. This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behaviors by children. When a child is misbehaving, follow these steps:
 - a. Go to the child and calmly ask him or her to stop the behavior. (Most children respond immediately and correct the behavior.) Give a warning and remind the child of class expectations, and redirect to a positive behavior. Do this individually. When possible, try not to single out a specific child in a large group setting. *When working with younger children, some physical redirection may be necessary: for example, removing a toy from the hands of a child who is hitting another.
 - b. If the child repeats the action, guide them to a quiet place – separate from the other children – for a short but designated period of time. Stay within sight of others and avoid being alone (or unseen) with the child. Provide the child with a simple, understandable reason for the separation and a clear explanation of your expectations. (“Bilal, you didn’t stop hitting Ahmad when I asked you to, so it was necessary for me to separate you from the group.”)
 - c. After a 3rd time, refer to a Jamaat employee or volunteer. A Jamaat employee or volunteer may inform a parent or guardian, who may be asked to become involved in redirecting misbehavior.
2. Uncontrollable or unusual behavior should be reported to the LIC:
 - a. Never yell at a child.
 - b. Never grab a child.
 - c. Never threaten a child. Always follow through with your word.
 - d. Never hit a child.
 - e. Never confront a parent in front of others.
 - f. Never humiliate a child.

Article VIII: Bullying

1. Verbal, physical, or emotional bullying is not acceptable in Jamaat programs. At the first sign of bullying in any form, act decisively, and inform a Jamaat employee or volunteer. There is no “harmless put-down” where bullying is concerned.

- a. *First Offense*: Issue a warning to the child and a general reminder to the group that this kind of interaction is wrong. Try not to embarrass or chastise.
- b. *Second Offense*: Pull the offending child(ren) from the group (in a seen or supervised location) and discuss the inappropriate interaction or behavior. Set clear parameters and behavioral goals. Let the child know that the next step is communication with a Jamaat employee or volunteer and the child's parents. Notify an immediate supervisor of any signs of bullying or verbal abuse. Privately, but with another adult present, confirm that a child who was the target of the bullying behaviors is not in danger of continued harassment and is physically and emotionally stable. Do not single a child out in front of the group. Be discreet.
- c. *Third Offense*: Send the child to a Jamaat employee or volunteer for a phone call (or communication onsite) with his or her parent(s) and possible removal from the activity or event.

Article IX: Restroom Policies Involving Children

1. All restroom entrances used by children will be monitored by cameras at all times.
2. Do not use or occupy a bathroom stall in use by children.
3. Parents should be asked to take their children to the bathroom before coming to a Jamaat event, so the child will not have to leave the supervised area. If any child requires assistance with their bathroom activities, all Jamaat employees or volunteers will observe the following policies:
 - a. Diapering
 - i. Only the child's parent or legal guardian will undertake the diapering of children of either sex.
 - ii. Children will never be left unattended on changing tables.
 - b. Toilet Use
 - i. Only the child's parent or legal guardian will assist in the child's toilet use.
 - ii. Children will never be left unattended in bathrooms.
 - iii. If you must go into the restroom to check on an individual child, seek out a Jamaat employee or volunteer to accompany you. If another a Jamaat employee or volunteer is unavailable, go to the exterior bathroom door, knock, and ask if the child needs assistance. Do not enter the restroom.
 - iv. If a child requires immediate assistance, leave the exterior bathroom door open when entering the bathroom area and try to verbally assist the child in completing his or her toileting activities, while the child remains behind the door of the bathroom stall.

Article X: Transportation of Children

1. A Jamaat employee or volunteer may be in a position to provide transportation for children. The following guidelines should be strictly observed when workers are involved in the transportation of children:
 - a. The Two Adult Rule applies to transportation of children.
 - b. Children should be transported directly to their destination. Unauthorized stops to a non-public place should be avoided. Jamaat employees and volunteers should avoid transportation circumstances that leave only one child in transport.

- c. Jamaat employees and volunteers should avoid physical contact with children while in vehicles.
- d. No drivers under age 25 may drive Jamaat-owned or rented vehicles.

Article XI: Interactions with Children

1. Verbal interactions between Jamaat employees or volunteers and children should be positive and uplifting. Jamaat employees and volunteers should strive to keep verbal interactions encouraging, constructive, and mindful of their mission of aiding parents in the spiritual growth and development of children.
2. To this end, Jamaat employees and staff should not talk to children in a way that is or could be construed by any reasonable observer as harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. In addition, staff members and volunteers are expected to refrain from swearing in the presence of children.
3. Jamaat employees and volunteers should never conduct one-to-one, unobserved meetings or interaction with children while participating in Jamaat programs. Another adult who has completed the Jamaat application and screening process should always be present.

Article XII: Intoxicant Use in Front of Children

1. Jamaat employees and volunteers are prohibited from the use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drugs at any time, especially while in any Jamaat facility, while traveling with children, or while working with or supervising children.
2. Jamaat requires employees and volunteers to abstain from the use of tobacco or marijuana products during Jamaat activities or programs, while in the presence of children or their parents.

Article XIII: Sexually Oriented Conversations and Materials

1. Jamaat employees and volunteers are prohibited from engaging in any sexually oriented conversations with children and are not permitted to discuss any inappropriate or explicit information about their own personal relationships or sexual activities with any child in the program.
2. Jamaat employees and volunteers at Jamaat facilities are prohibited from possessing any sexually oriented materials (magazines, cards, images, videos, films, etc.) on mosque or mission house property or in the presence of children.
3. Jamaat employees and volunteers at Jamaat facilities should never be nude in the presence of children in their care.
4. In the event there is a situation that may call for or contemplate the possibility of nudity (*i.e.*, changing clothes during a weekend or overnight retreat, etc.), the Jamaat program in charge will submit a plan to the LIC concerning arrangements for showering or changing clothes.

Article XIV: Sexual Misconduct Awareness Training (SMAT)

1. SMAT Rollout
 - a. Every Jamaat employee or officeholder that interacts with children must complete SMAT every two years.
 - b. Any new Jama'at employee or volunteer must both be a member of the Jama'at and attend Jama'at programs for six (6) months before being eligible to serve in any

volunteer positions providing access to children, students or vulnerable populations.

- c. Any new Jama'at employee or volunteer must first complete SMAT prior to interacting with children.
 - d. The National Office of Legal Advisor will ensure that all National Amila members (and all team members working under national departments) and Jama'at employees complete SMAT before serving.
 - e. The National Office of General Secretary will ensure that local presidents have their respective local Amila members complete SMAT before serving.
 - f. The National Office of General Secretary office will request all auxiliary heads to ensure their respective Amila members complete SMAT before serving.
 - g. The National Tarbiyyat Department will ensure all Tahir Academy volunteers, including teachers and administrators, complete SMAT before serving.
 - h. The National Waqf e Nau Department will ensure all Waqf e Nau volunteers, including teachers and administrators, complete SMAT before serving.
 - i. Every local chapter will conduct a local SMAT training program on an annual basis. All Ansar, Lajna, Khuddam, Atfal and Nasirat should participate.
2. SMAT entails each Jamaat employee, Jamaat officeholder and any volunteer who interacts with children (including volunteers in Tahir Academy, Waqf e Nau, Ansar, Lajna, Atfal and Nasirat):
- a. Being a Jamaat member, attending Jama'at programs for at least six (6) months, and having a Jamaat ID number for at least six (6) months;
 - b. Completing a comprehensive Child Sexual Abuse Awareness Training, with certification;
 - c. Completing an employee application (only for officeholders who are Jamaat employees);
 - d. Passing a virtual or face-to-face screening interview with a relevant department officeholder;
 - e. Providing two (2) character references;
 - f. Clearing criminal background checks (processed by National Office of Legal Advisor);
 - g. Signing a disclaimer (see Appendix II) that they have read and understood the SP

Appendix I: Sexual Misconduct Complaint Form

Accuser Name: _____

Accuser Jamaat ID Number: _____

Accuser's Legal Guardian's Name (if the accuser is under 18 years of age):

Accuser's Legal Guardian's ID Number: _____

Accuser's (or Accuser's Legal Guardian's) Email: _____

Accuser's (or Accuser's Legal Guardian's) Phone Number:

Alleged sexual misconduct took place on (Time, Day, Month, Year) and at (place):

Is the alleged sexual misconduct ongoing? _____

Name of Accused: _____

Identify any witness or individual with information regarding this alleged event:

Describe the incident in detail (add an extra sheet(s) if needed):

Provide any other pertinent information:

I affirm that the above allegation is true to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief.

Accuser Signature: _____ Date: _____

Received By (Print Name): _____ Date: _____

Received By (Signature): _____

Appendix II: Sexual Misconduct Policy (SP) Disclaimer Form

I affirm that I:

1. Read and understand the entire SP;
2. Agree to comply with the SP;
3. Understand that it is my responsibility to keep myself updated about any modification the SP may undergo at any time; and
4. Understand that all material contained in the SP does not express or imply a contractual employment relationship between the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community and myself.

Officeholder Name: _____ Officeholder ID: _____

Officeholder Signature: _____ Date: _____

Received By (Print Name): _____ Date: _____

Received By (Signature): _____